

MONDAY
25 APRIL
 Mark the Evangelist
 Proverbs 15:28-end
 or Acts 15:35-end
 Psalm 119:9-16
 Ephesians 4:7-16
 Mark 13:5-13

TUESDAY
26 APRIL
 George, martyr,
 patron of England
 1 Maccabees 2:59-64 or Revelation 12:7-12
 Psalm 126
 2 Timothy 2:3-13
 John 15:18-21

WEDNESDAY
27 APRIL
 Acts 5:17-26
 Psalm 34:1-8
 John 3:16-21

THURSDAY
28 APRIL
 Acts 5:27-33
 Psalm 34:1. 15-end
 John 3:31-end

FRIDAY
29 APRIL
 Acts 5:34-end
 Psalm 27:1-5. 16-17
 John 6:1-15

SATURDAY
30 APRIL
 Acts 6:1-7
 Psalm 33:1-5. 18-19
 John 6:16-21

REFLECTION

A week of miracles and mystery. Miracles, as Jesus astonishes the crowds on Friday by feeding 5,000 people on two fish and five rolls, and strides out on the restless waves to meet the disciples on Saturday. Miracles, as the Holy Spirit powers through the book of Acts, bringing believers to Christ and strength to the churches.

Meanwhile Wednesday's Gospel reading focuses on the great mystery of incarnation. We tend to think of mystery as dark but there's radiance here – the mystery, perhaps, of walking out of darkness towards light.

This week we also commemorate two saints – Mark on Monday and George on Tuesday. In the readings to accompany them we are warned that following Jesus will set us apart from the world, and we hear of "wars and rumours of wars" to come. Yet these ominous messages are followed by the most wonderful assurance: "do not worry... but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit"

This promise – that God will accompany us throughout whatever challenges we may meet in life, and give us the resources to meet them head on – is perhaps the greatest, most mysterious and wonderful miracle of all.

PRAYER

Risen Christ,
 For whom no door is locked, no entrance barred,
 open the doors of our hearts,
 that we may seek the good of others
 and walk the joyful road of sacrifice and peace,
 to the praise of God the Father.



Saint-Sulpice de Fougères, France. Tiberiu Stan / Shutterstock.com

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GREAT PREACHERS

PART I – MARTIN LUTHER KING JR (1929-1968)

When the risen Jesus said to Mary Magdalene, "Go and tell," he echoed words he had spoken to his followers during his ministry. Ever since, people have been proclaiming the good news, the Gospel of Jesus Christ. We would not have the New Testament if the early Christians had not first spoken of their experiences. The written word came later.

Even after the invention of the printing press few people could read. For centuries the spoken word was the only way most people learned about the living word. And in some ways this is still true today. In an increasingly secular world, a sermon at a funeral, wedding or christening is often someone's first contact with the good news of Jesus.

One other possibility is when a speech by a Christian is broadcast, such as Martin Luther King's powerful "I have a dream" speech in 1963, preaching equality. The repetition of that powerful phrase is typical of the oral tradition of preaching, helping people to remember. In King's final Christmas sermon, broadcast on radio just months before his assassination, he developed the idea, using the words "I still have a dream" to proclaim a message of peace on earth.

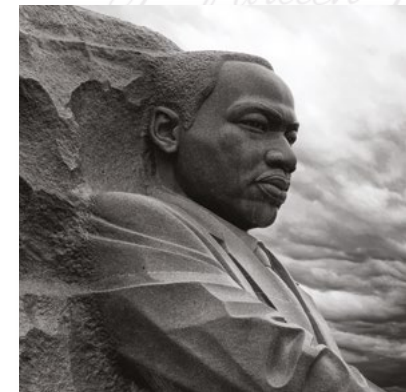
Sermons or speeches, the spoken word is often more potent than the written. How did Jesus himself sound? What gestures or posture did he use? What tone of voice? Many of his puzzling or even apparently harsh words can be better understood if readers imagine a tone of compassion or humour or sadness, or genuine human anger.

Great sermons and speeches of intervening generations, before television and radio, lose something of their original power when all that remains is a transcript. Language difficulties (even in translation) play a part, and modern attention spans are far shorter in this age of soundbites, but in books and online their words are readily available. Great preachers of the past can still speak to Christians today. Perhaps, in the coming weeks, some of them will.

LIVE
 the WORD

SUSTAINING YOU
 THROUGH THE WEEK

Edited by
 Caroline Hodgson
 and
 Heather Smith



Martin Luther King memorial.
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Second week of Easter

Monday 25 April to
 Saturday 30 April
 2022

WEEK